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To: Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

From: Richard J. Scaldini, Ph.D.
Spearpoint Strategy Advisors, LLC

Date: February 9, 2011

Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 6050, An Act Concerning the Development of the
Creative Economy

I am very pleased to submit this testimony to the Committee in support of H.B. 6050. I am a management consultant serving the nonprofit and for-profit arts sectors in Connecticut. As a former college president, business man, and professor of literature, I wish to emphasize the importance of this initiative from each of these perspectives.

It is essential that the contributions of the arts to the Connecticut economy were better known. The following statistics reflect substantial economic activity that merits cultivation and growth:

- Connecticut ranks high among the 50 states by numbers of artists in the workforce, with a total of 29,861: 4th out of 50 states by percentage of artists in the labor force and 7th by number of artists per capita.
- The arts employ over 27,000 people in Connecticut; the arts industry supports over 44,000 jobs statewide.
- The arts generate over \$3.8 billion in gross state product annually, including \$2.6 billion in personal income.
- State funding for the arts (grants to arts organizations and artists) is matched by private

sector contributions at the rate of \$11 for every dollar spent by the state.

- Over 22 million people per year experience Connecticut's cultural attractions.

The Creative Economy bill will establish for the arts a concrete foundation for strategy development and growth. It will educate citizens and government officials to the critical role the arts already play in the life of Connecticut, and set the stage for further support and development: if we know more, we will do more.

The Creative Economy Bill will also help to publicize the far-reaching effects of cultural activities across the lives of Connecticut citizens and visitors. As indicated above, the arts create jobs and generate income. In addition, the arts are a powerful educational discipline that goes to the heart of the global competitiveness challenge. Nowhere do students experience and learn creativity and innovation better than through engagement with the arts, whether as practitioners or observers. Connecticut's HOT Schools are a noteworthy example of the leverage the arts bring when they are integrated with learning in mathematics, science, and language.¹ Finally it is a well-established fact of economic development that regions characterized by a rich and widely available cultural life are magnets for companies and industries seeking a stimulating environment for their employees.

I believe that the Creative Economy bill, by its research to establish the human and economic importance of the arts to life in Connecticut, will help to change the inaccurate and harmful perception of the arts as a "luxury" available only to an affluent few. The arts and artists are entrepreneurial, innovative, and educational: such forces help to build a community of adaptive, creative, and forward-looking citizens in all professions and sectors of the economy. Think of Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*, a man of the people, who brought the inventiveness of the American industrial revolution to illuminate the Dark Ages. Twain would have supported this bill.

In conclusion, the Creative Economy bill is predicated on the notion that cultural activities do not take place in isolation. By illustrating the economic and social presence of the arts in the state, the bill will help us to integrate, coordinate, and leverage Connecticut's dynamic artistic community as a driving force for growth and global competitiveness.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard J. Scaldini, Ph.D.

¹ I have attached for your information an article I published on the *Arts as Engines of Economic Development* in the *Litchfield County Times*, July 24, 2009.